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A HOT ONE.

Miss Oldgirl—When a man sees a girl under the mistletoe he has the right to kiss her. Don't you think the mistletoe tradition is beautiful?

Mr. Kutting Hintz—The most beautiful part of it is that he doesn't have to.

TWO RARE COINS
FOUND IN ESTATE.

CARLISLE (Pa.), December 8.—Two of the almost priceless United States silver dollars of the 1804 issue turned up here today, having been found by Miss Mabel Smith, executrix of the estate, among the effects of the late John C. Comfort, once a well known patent attorney, who died two weeks ago.

Although more than 19,000 of the coins were minted, nearly all of them were started for a foreign country in a ship that was lost at sea. As far as coin experts know, there are only four more of the pieces in existence, and the last time one was sold it brought more than \$3000.

ELECTRIC TRUST WILL COME NEXT

GOVERNMENT WILL TEST LEGALITY OF PATENT AGREEMENT OF ELECTRICAL COMPANIES.

NEW YORK, Dec. 1.—About ten years ago Mr. Westinghouse caused a statement to be prepared showing the legal expenses which the protection of his patents created amounted to from the time he began inventing and marketing electrical apparatus. He was amazed when he saw the total. He passed the paper containing the figures to the present writer, saying: "You will see how large an item of expense litigation for the protection of patents is for a manufacturing company like that of which I am president." Mr. Westinghouse was asked if he thought the other great electric corporation, of which Mr. Coffin is president, had been compelled to pay bills of equal, or approximately equal, amounts. "His bills must have been very large," Mr. Westinghouse responded.

It was the contemplation of the expenses of litigation to protect patents which undoubtedly brought about an undertaking between the larger of the electric companies of the United States. That agreement provided that each company might use the patents of the other subject of course to a fair royalty. The agreement may be regarded as in restraint of trade, as tending to prevent competition. But that was not the purpose of it. It was entered into simply to put an end to very heavy legal expenses. The experiment has been fully justified, and one of the principal items of cost in the direction of these corporations has been to a great extent eliminated.

Edison had a similar experience. To protect his patents has cost him millions, and although in almost all cases he has received final judgments in his favor, yet in many instances these judgments were handed down only a few months before the expiration of the patents. In not one instance has Edison ever received a penny representing damages awarded by the courts for the infringements of his patents. This experience has led him to be strongly in favor of the license system, and he has sometimes wondered whether he would not have been better off pecuniarily had he relied upon the trade secret principle for the protection of his inventions.

To Dissolve the Electric Trust.
Word has come from Washington that the Department of Justice is about to begin proceedings in the Federal courts, having for their purpose the dissolution of the so-called Electric Trust. It will be something of a surprise if the evidence obtained by the government makes it clear that the great electrical companies of the United States are practically operated upon the combination or trust principle. Certainly the competition, at least until within a short time, between them has been very keen. There is still in commercial and railway circles vivid recollections of the fierce competition carried on by the two great electric companies for the contract for electrifying one of the greater railways of southern New Jersey. In this city, after the Legislature commanded the railroad companies to electrify their terminals, a competition which was both scientific as well as theoretic, and in addition practical and financial, was for a considerable period in progress, between the great electric com-

pany at Pittsburg, and the even greater electric company at Schenectady. From the point of view of science this competition involved demonstration of the economy, safety and expediency of the direct current, the apparatus for which is controlled by President Coffin's company, and the alternating current, which utilizes inventions of Mr. Westinghouse and his associates. The New York Central Railroad accepted the propositions made by President Coffin. The New Haven railroad preferred the alternating current, and the apparatus for using it, invented by Mr. Westinghouse. The struggle was a desperate one. In it is not to be found any evidence of such a combination as the Attorney General might reasonably regard as having been formed in violation of the anti-trust law.

Monopoly of Patents.
So far as the public knows, the only combination entered into between the greater electric companies is one involving a common use of patents upon payment of royalties. Apparently the Department of Justice deems it worth while to test in the courts whether or not a monopoly secured by patent may be so used as to violate the anti-trust law. Should the courts so find, then a new and very unexpected issue will have been created. It might be so extended as to include some of the companies operated under the Edison patents. It would almost appear to invalidate the license system, certainly if that system gave exclusive right to one corporation within a certain district, to operate under patents controlled by another corporation. So far as now can be seen, the question involving proceedings against the so-called Electric Trust is simply this: Must a corporation that controls a patent be compelled to make exclusive use of that patent in its own manufactory? For it is thought to be apparent that the Department of Justice does not purpose attacking the monopoly itself, which is the vital quality of a patent.

BRYAN'S WARNING OF "JOB" SESSION

The commoner, William Jennings Bryan's paper, sees dreaded evils to be fought at the present session of Congress, according to the following article in the issue of December 9:

"The last session of congress has won the title of the 'job' session because it is held after the election, when many congressmen have been repudiated at the polls, and when even those who have been reelected feel less restraint because of the time that must elapse before another election. Every careful observer of congressional proceedings has noticed the tendency on the part of those in charge of questionable legislation to postpone action until the last session, and that tendency is even more marked when a party is going out of power. The democratic and progressive republicans must be on their guard during the session that convenes in December. The special interests, seeing that they will not be able to control the next congress, will do their utmost to realize on the investment they have made in the present congress. The ship subsidy will be pushed if there is a chance of carrying it through; the national incorporation of railroads is another scheme that may take on new life, and a Washington dispatch in the Chicago Tribune recently announced that Attorney General Wickersham was preparing a bill providing for the incorporation of the trusts. The dispatch says that the 'big business

interests are behind the idea of national incorporation."

"If the democrats can prevent these and other objectionable measures from being passed at the closing session of the present congress, these measures may be killed for a generation. Every democrat and progressive republican should be vigilant during the remaining days of this congress."

Fine Job Printing, Star Office.

CONTRACT PLACED FOR

GREAT CUNARD LINER.

LIVERPOOL, December 8.—The Cunard Steamship Company has placed a contract with John Brown & Co., Clyde Bank, Scotland, for the construction of a big liner for the New York service. The specifications for the new Cunard line steamship call for a vessel a little longer than the White Star liner Olympic, now the largest vessel in the world. She will be 888 feet in length, with a total displacement of 50,000 tons and a

speed of about twenty-three knots. she will carry 650 first-class passengers, 740 second-class and 2400 steerage.

FATAL.

"Of course, doctor, German measles are seldom serious."
"I never met but one fatal case."
"Fatal!"
"Yes, it was a Frenchman, and when he discovered it was German measles that he had, mortification set in."—Tit

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EVERYTHING GOES—20% TO 35% REDUCTION ON

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